

Vintage Italy

The wine regions of
Rome, Florence & Venice
June 9 – 19, 2015

With an extended tour of
Verona, Bellagio & Milan
June 19 – 24, 2015

Highlights

- Explore the culturally rich cities of Rome, Florence, Venice, Verona, and Milan
- Visit the small hill towns of Tuscany, the islands near Venice, and the castle of Soave
- Dine with a Roman family in their private penthouse home with views of the Vatican
- Sample the wines and food of the Romani Castelli, Tuscany, and Veneto regions
- Spend the day at a small family owned winery in the peaceful Tuscan countryside
- Celebrate Florence's heritage at the *Calcio Sorico* historical parade
- Enjoy opera under the stars in an ancient Roman arena in *Verona*
- Relax and refresh in Italy's most beautiful village, Bellagio on Lake Como
- View the artistic and architectural wonders of Italy: St. Peter's, the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo's *Pieta* and *David*, Da Vinci's *Last Supper*, Brunelleschi's Dome

Depart U.S. June 8

Day 1 Tuesday, June 9 Rome (D)

Arrive in Rome with a private transfer from the airport to the hotel. Explore the neighborhood of *Piazza Campo de Fiori*, an outdoor market by day and a neighborhood gathering place in the evening. After lunch on the piazza, take a leisurely stroll from the hotel to the *Trevi Fountain*, stopping to explore *Piazza Navona* and the *Pantheon*, and have a refreshing gelato break. In the evening, dine under the stars at a restaurant on the elegant *Piazza Farnese*.
Hotel Campo De Fiori (4 nights) www.hotelcampodefiori.com

Day 2 Wednesday, June 10 Rome (B)

In the morning, tour the *Roman Forum*, *Capitoline Hill*, *Arch of Constantine*, and the *Coliseum* with our private guide, Carla Viti. Immerse yourself in the politics, economics, and daily life of Ancient Rome. Spend the afternoon exploring Rome at your leisure. Bring a guide book. There is a lot to see! Gather in the evening to enjoy fine Italian wine on the hotel terrace and watch the sun set over Rome.

Day 3 Thursday, June 11 Rome (B, D)

This morning, stroll to the independent country, *Vatican City*, and immerse yourself in the art, architecture, and religion of the Renaissance. Tour the *Vatican Museum* and the famous *Sistine Chapel* before entering *St. Peter's Basilica*, the grandest church on earth. Admire Bernini's altar masterpiece, gaze up at Michelangelo's awesome dome, and view the Vatican's greatest treasure – Michelangelo's *Pieta*. Join in the celebration of *Mass* at a chapel within *St. Peter's Basilica*. In the evening, enjoy a very unique experience. Dine at the penthouse home of Carla Viti. From her "Bella Vista" terrace with a spectacular view of St. Peter's dome, enjoy fine wine, Italian cuisine, and lively conversation with new Roman friends as they share tips for cooking Italian style.

Day 4 Friday, June 12 Romani Castelli, Rome (B, Light Lunch)

Escape the city with a private driver and tour the *Romani Castelli* region in the Roman countryside. With its spectacular lakes and ancient hill towns, emperors and popes have vacationed here in luxury for centuries. Visit picturesque lake villages and tour a winery for a tasting of the region's fine wine paired with local food specialties.



Day 5 Saturday, June 13 Assisi, Florence (B)

Depart Rome in the morning by private vehicle for sophisticated Florence, the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance. On the way, visit the mystical Umbrian hill town of Assisi, forever linked in legend with its native son, St. Francis. Leisurely explore the highlights of this beautiful town: St. Francis Basilica and the main piazza surrounded by ancient Roman architecture. Wander the back streets, relax in a café sipping coffee or the local wine. In the late afternoon, explore the neighborhood surrounding your Florence hotel on the Arno River. Visit the jewelry shops on *Ponte Vecchio* and the famous *Uffizi Gallery*, home to the world's greatest collection of Italian paintings.

Hotel Berchielli (3 nights) www.berchielli.it



Day 6 Sunday, June 14 Florence (B)

In the morning, join your private guide for a tour of Florence's historical city center, including the *Duomo*, Florence's largest church topped with its crowning glory, Brunelleschi's brilliantly engineered dome. Visit the *Accademia Museum*, housing Michelangelo's magnificent sculpture, *David*. In the afternoon, observe the historic and glorious parade of the Republic of Florence as it winds its way through the medieval streets to the *Piazza Signoria*.

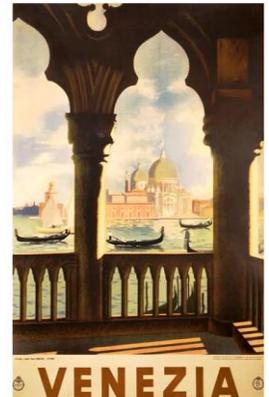
Day 7 Monday, June 15 Chianti, Florence (B, L)

In the morning, depart the city for the countryside and drive along the idyllic Chianti road in the famous red wine producing region of Tuscany. Make a sightseeing stop along the way before arriving at the small family-run Chianti Classico winery, Montefioralle, located on a hilltop overlooking the Tuscan landscape. Take a tour of the vineyard and cellars, taste the varietal wine produced on the estate, and have lunch on the terrace with views of the vineyards and the quaint village of Montefioralle. After lunch, take a short stroll to this classic Tuscan village, a peaceful refuge from the city. *Optional excursion: Fly fishing with a private guide in the beautiful Tuscany rivers (extra cost).*

Day 8 Tuesday, June 16 Venice (B)

Depart Florence on a high speed train to Venice. On arrival in Venice, take a private water taxi, cruising along canals, to the doorstep of the hotel. Have a relaxing lunch at a restaurant on a canal near the hotel and then take the short walk to Piazza San Marco, the grandest square in Europe. Tour the elaborate *Doge's Palace*, the most powerful seat of government in Europe for 400 years.

Hotel Ala (3 nights) www.hotelala.it



Day 9 Wednesday, June 17 Venice (B)

With a private guide, discover historic and hidden Venice. Visit *St. Mark's Basilica*, the awesome Byzantium style cathedral decorated in priceless gold mosaics. With your guide, wander away from the main tourist areas and explore this ancient city on foot and by boat. In the evening, enjoy the romantic lights and sounds of this unique city.

Day 10 Thursday, June 18 Murano, Burano, Venice (B, Evening vino i aperitivo)

In the morning, take a water taxi to the island of Murano. Watch artisans create beautiful works of art from hand blown glass. Continue on to the quaint fishing island of Burano, famous for its handmade lace and brightly painted buildings. Choose a trattoria on the canal and relax over a long lunch. Spend the afternoon exploring the sights of Venice: the narrow alleys and canal bridges, the once magnificent palaces, and the romantic gondolas. Step into shops where artisans have been perfecting their crafts for centuries. You can't get lost – you're on an island and all signs lead to San Marco. In the evening, gather with your traveling companions to enjoy wine and appetizers at the renowned *Café Florian* on *Piazza San Marco* and listen to the music of the dueling orchestras.

Day 11 Friday, June 19 Fly Home (B)

Depart Venice for your flight home.

OR, extend your tour:

Day 11 Friday, June 19 Soave, Verona (B)

Depart Venice by water taxi and private vehicle to Verona, the home of the legendary Romeo and Juliet. On the way, visit a medieval castle high on a hill overlooking the ancient vineyards of the Veneto region. After visiting the castle, enjoy a tasting of quality Soave white wine, both classic and sparkling. Later in the afternoon, stroll Verona's two main piazzas connected by an elegant pedestrian-only shopping street and explore Verona's medieval sites. Dine at your leisure at one of Verona's many outdoor cafés on the city's central piazza dominated by the well-preserved ancient Roman arena.

Hotel Accademia (2 nights) www.hotelaccademiaverona.it



Day 12 Saturday, June 20 Verona (B, D)

In the morning, take a walking tour of historic Verona, crossing over an original Roman bridge and visiting the ancient Roman Theater. Walk up the hill above the Theater for lunch on a terrace overlooking the city of Verona. In the evening, enjoy a pre-opera buffet at the hotel before attending the famous opera *Aida*, in the magnificent and ancient open air *Roman Arena*. While sipping sparkling wine, experience the spectacle among the Italians, proud and passionate about their opera.

Day 13 Sunday, June 21 Bellagio (B)

Depart Verona for Bellagio, one of the most beautiful villages in Europe. Enjoy the spectacular view of the mountains and Lake Como from the lakefront hotel. Relax at the hotel's outdoor terrace restaurant or spend the afternoon shopping or dining in the village, just steps from the hotel.

Hotel Florence (2 nights) www.hotelflorencebellagio.it



Day 14 Monday, June 22 Bellagio (B)

Spend the day relaxing and reflecting, known in Italy as *dolce far niente*, the "sweetness of doing nothing". Take the water bus across the lake to visit the beautiful and peaceful gardens of *Villa Carlotta*, shop for quality items from all over Italy, enjoy the services of the hotel's spa, hike the surrounding hills for spectacular views, or stroll along the beautiful lake, framed by imposing mountain peaks.

Day 15 Tuesday, June 23 Milan (B, D)

Depart Bellagio and check into the Milan city center hotel. View Leonardo DaVinci's famous painting, *The Last Supper*, and visit Milan's massive gothic cathedral, the *Duomo*. Spend the afternoon shopping the fashion capital of the world in the grand *Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II*, steps from the hotel. Enjoy a "Farewell to Italy" dinner at a traditional Milanese restaurant.

Hotel Spadari al Duomo (1 night) www.spadarihotel.com



Day 16 Wednesday, June 24 Fly home (B)

In the morning, depart the Milan hotel for the airport for your flight home.

Rome to Venice: \$3400 per person (double)

Verona to Milan: \$1550 per person (double)

Escorted, small group tour includes:

4* deluxe accommodations in city centers

Private luxury vehicles or high-speed train transport within Italy

Daily breakfast, 2 special lunches, 4 gourmet dinners

All museum and event entries listed in the itinerary

Local guides in Rome, Florence, and Venice

Guide and driver gratuities

(Round trip airfare from US not included)

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